

## **Assembly Bill No. 1166**

### **CHAPTER 171**

An act to amend Section 51225.1 of the Education Code, relating to pupils.

[Approved by Governor August 11, 2015. Filed with  
Secretary of State August 11, 2015.]

#### **LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

AB 1166, Bloom. Pupils in foster care: pupils who are homeless children or youth: school transfer: exemption from local graduation requirements.

Existing law requires a school district, except as provided, to exempt a pupil in foster care, as defined, or a pupil who is a homeless child or youth, as defined, who transfers between schools any time after the completion of the pupil's 2nd year of high school from all coursework and other requirements adopted by the governing board of the school district that are in addition to certain statewide coursework requirements. Existing law requires the school district to notify specified individuals, including a pupil in foster care or a pupil who is a homeless child or youth, within 30 calendar days of the date that a pupil who may qualify for the exemption from local graduation requirements transfers into a school, of the availability of the exemption and whether the pupil qualifies for an exemption.

This bill would, if the school district fails to provide that notification, declare the effected pupil eligible for the exemption from local graduation requirements once notified, even if that notification is received after the termination of the court's jurisdiction over the pupil or after the pupil is no longer a homeless child or youth, as applicable, if the pupil otherwise qualifies for the exemption.

Existing law requires, if a pupil in foster care is exempted from local graduation requirements, that the exemption continue to apply after the termination of the court's jurisdiction over the pupil while he or she is enrolled in school or if the pupil transfers to another school or school district.

This bill would require, if a pupil who is a homeless child or youth is exempted from local graduation requirements, that the exemption continue to apply after the pupil is no longer a homeless child or youth while he or she is enrolled in school or if the pupil transfers to another school or school district.

By requiring school districts to perform additional duties in complying with the exemption requirement, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. Section 51225.1 of the Education Code is amended to read:

51225.1. (a) Notwithstanding any other law, a school district shall exempt a pupil in foster care, as defined in Section 51225.2, or a pupil who is a homeless child or youth, as defined in Section 11434a(2) of Title 42 of the United States Code, who transfers between schools any time after the completion of the pupil's second year of high school from all coursework and other requirements adopted by the governing board of the school district that are in addition to the statewide coursework requirements specified in Section 51225.3, unless the school district makes a finding that the pupil is reasonably able to complete the school district's graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the pupil's fourth year of high school.

(b) If the school district determines that the pupil in foster care, or the pupil who is a homeless child or youth, is reasonably able to complete the school district's graduation requirements within the pupil's fifth year of high school, the school district shall do all of the following:

(1) Inform the pupil of his or her option to remain in school for a fifth year to complete the school district's graduation requirements.

(2) Inform the pupil, and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the pupil, about how remaining in school for a fifth year to complete the school district's graduation requirements will affect the pupil's ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution.

(3) Provide information to the pupil about transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.

(4) Permit the pupil to stay in school for a fifth year to complete the school district's graduation requirements upon agreement with the pupil, if the pupil is 18 years of age or older, or, if the pupil is under 18 years of age, upon agreement with the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the pupil.

(c) To determine whether a pupil in foster care, or a pupil who is a homeless child or youth, is in the third or fourth year of high school, either the number of credits the pupil has earned to the date of transfer or the length of the pupil's school enrollment may be used, whichever will qualify the pupil for the exemption.

(d) (1) (A) Within 30 calendar days of the date that a pupil in foster care who may qualify for the exemption from local graduation requirements pursuant to this section transfers into a school, the school district shall notify the pupil, the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the pupil, and the pupil's social worker, of the availability of the exemption and whether the pupil qualifies for an exemption.

(B) If the school district fails to provide timely notice pursuant to subparagraph (A), the pupil described in subparagraph (A) shall be eligible for the exemption from local graduation requirements pursuant to this section once notified, even if that notification occurs after the termination of the court's jurisdiction over the pupil, if the pupil otherwise qualifies for the exemption pursuant to this section.

(2) (A) Within 30 calendar days of the date that a pupil who is a homeless child or youth may qualify for the exemption from local graduation requirements pursuant to this section transfers into a school, the school district shall notify the pupil, the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the pupil, and the local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youth designated pursuant to Section 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii) of Title 42 of the United States Code, of the availability of the exemption and whether the pupil qualifies for an exemption.

(B) If the school district fails to provide timely notice pursuant to subparagraph (A), the pupil described in subparagraph (A) shall be eligible for the exemption from local graduation requirements pursuant to this section once notified, even if that notification occurs after the pupil is no longer a homeless child or youth, if the pupil otherwise qualifies for the exemption pursuant to this section.

(e) If a pupil in foster care, or a pupil who is a homeless child or youth, is exempted from local graduation requirements pursuant to this section and completes the statewide coursework requirements specified in Section 51225.3 before the end of his or her fourth year in high school and that pupil would otherwise be entitled to remain in attendance at the school, a school or school district shall not require or request that the pupil graduate before the end of his or her fourth year of high school.

(f) If a pupil in foster care, or a pupil who is a homeless child or youth, is exempted from local graduation requirements pursuant to this section, the school district shall notify the pupil and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the pupil how any of the requirements that are waived will affect the pupil's ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution and shall provide information about transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.

(g) A pupil in foster care, or a pupil who is a homeless child or youth, who is eligible for the exemption from local graduation requirements pursuant to this section and would otherwise be entitled to remain in attendance at the school shall not be required to accept the exemption or be denied enrollment in, or the ability to complete, courses for which he or she is otherwise eligible, including courses necessary to attend an institution of higher education, regardless of whether those courses are required for statewide graduation requirements.

(h) If a pupil in foster care, or a pupil who is a homeless child or youth, is not exempted from local graduation requirements or has previously declined the exemption pursuant to this section, a school district shall exempt the pupil at any time if an exemption is requested by the pupil and the pupil qualifies for the exemption.

(i) If a pupil in foster care, or a pupil who is a homeless child or youth, is exempted from local graduation requirements pursuant to this section, a school district shall not revoke the exemption.

(j) (1) If a pupil in foster care is exempted from local graduation requirements pursuant to this section, the exemption shall continue to apply after the termination of the court's jurisdiction over the pupil while he or she is enrolled in school or if the pupil transfers to another school or school district.

(2) If a pupil who is a homeless child or youth is exempted from local graduation requirements pursuant to this section, the exemption shall continue to apply after the pupil is no longer a homeless child or youth while he or she is enrolled in school or if the pupil transfers to another school or school district.

(k) A school district shall not require or request a pupil in foster care, or a pupil who is a homeless child or youth, to transfer schools in order to qualify the pupil for an exemption pursuant to this section.

(l) (1) A pupil in foster care, the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the pupil, the pupil's social worker, or the pupil's probation officer shall not request a transfer solely to qualify the pupil for an exemption pursuant to this section.

(2) A pupil who is a homeless child or youth, the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the pupil, or the local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youth designated pursuant to Section 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii) of Title 42 of the United States Code, shall not request a transfer solely to qualify the pupil for an exemption pursuant to this section.

SEC. 2. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.